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FM AMEMBASSY MANILA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2765
INFO RUEHZS/ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN NATIONS IMMEDIATE
RHHMUNA/CDRUSPACOM HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC//OSD/ISA/AP// IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 003670

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR EAP/MTS
USPACOM ALSO FOR FPA HUSO
JOINT STAFF J5 (WILKES/ROBINSON/CLEMONS)
OSD/ISA/AP (LAWLESS/TOOLAN/BAILEY)

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/01/2016
TAGS: PTER MOPS MCAP PREL RP
SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 1 UPDATE ON JOLO OPERATIONS

REF: A. MANILA 3560

- 1B. MANILA 3401
- 1C. MANILA 3352
- 1D. MANILA 3299
- 1E. MANILA 3218

Classified By: (U) Charge d'Affaires, a.i., Paul W. Jones
for reasons 1.4(b) and (d).

11. (C) The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is maintaining the pressure on fugitive Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) terrorists on Jolo as "Operation Ultimatum" reaches its one-month mark. ASG leaders, Khadaffy Janjalani and Abu Sulaiman, and JI operatives, Umar Patek and Dulmatin, are thought to have returned to the vicinity of their former stronghold of Mount Tumatangis in western Jolo. The AFP has kept the terrorists on the move during the last 30 days -- they have rarely spent more than 48 hours in a single location -- and is currently planning another attack against the terrorists' suspected location.

12. (SBU) The Philippine Navy, with US support, is maintaining a tight maritime cordon around Jolo. Since August 1, it has conducted 732 maritime interdictions, including 50 stops during the last 24 hours. On August 22, the Department of Foreign Affairs speedily approved in less than eight hours the diplomatic clearance request for the USS Halsey's (JTF 515) SH-60 helicopters to support AFP operations. By August 26, the SH-60s, which have all-weather and infrared capability, were conducting maritime intercept rehearsals with Philippine Navy ships. The aircraft are now completely integrated into and supporting the maritime cordon.

13. (U) Civil military operations have been a critical element to winning the population to the side of the Philippine government, both before and during the operation. The AFP, assisted by Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines (JSOTF-P) troops, opened newly constructed Area Coordination Centers in Panamao and Indanan on August 30. Jolo Governor Loong's remarks at the Panamao ribbon-cutting focused on the partnership between local government and the AFP to rid the island of lawlessness. The JSOTF-P Chaplain presented ten sewing machines to community residents to help start a livelihood program.

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Jones